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**American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles**  
State Lead Chapter for Disaster Services

**Date:** October 19, 2001

**To:** Little Hoover Commission

**From:** Jim McColm  
Chapter Manager  
American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles

**Subject:** **Disaster Preparedness Activities in California**

The American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles is the state lead chapter for disaster services.

Response to disasters, large and small statewide has been planned for county by county. Several counties have been clustered together to provide cluster support groups.

The County based support groups are operated by 3 zone operations. They are North Coastal in San Francisco, Central State in Sacramento, and Southern California in Pasadena. The zones support each other. On only one occasion have all 3 zones been active at the same time the state lead chapter directs the zones.

We have recently revitalized our disaster services and have emphasized building relationships and inter workings with cities, counties, and state emergency service entities.

While these are currently good relationships, they need constant attention due to personnel changes. We currently enjoy excellent relationships with cities, counties, and the state and find that these relationships improve and function more smoothly as they are practiced and used.

Continuing participating in planning, drilling and evaluation with city, county and state organizations is of high importance.

The American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles, California's State Lead Chapter for Disaster Services (SLC-DS) has administered over the last five years, a California Disaster Revitalization program to advance the response capacity of Red Cross Chapters.

The SLC-DS has been as a broker of resources through which Chapters have built capacity for disaster service delivery. Outcomes have been largely dependent upon the willingness and capacity of Chapters to take advantage of and apply the resources available to them under the California Disaster Revitalization Plan.

Outcomes achieved through California Disaster Revitalization are intended to be sustained beyond the life of the California Disaster Revitalization Plan through the capability of Chapters to prepare for and respond to disasters. (The formal Revitalization effort is scheduled to terminate June 30, 2002)

All efforts of California Disaster Revitalization support the values of inclusiveness and access to the diverse population of California.

**Efforts in FY 01 Included...**

Provide leadership to facilitate collaboration among state consortium Red Cross Chapters.

- Managed and supported meetings of the statewide Disaster Services committee.
- SLD-DS staff participated in numerous Chapter, cluster and zone meetings statewide.

Develop and maintain California disaster response and coordination capabilities.

- Improved the computer systems in used at the California Disaster Coordinating Center (CDCC) with the implementation of new workstations and server.
- Provided monetary support to maintain a communications system for Chapter, Zone and State disaster response activities.
- Provided for the replacement and maintenance of California disaster cache equipment.
- Developed plans for the support of disaster services statewide.

Supported the activities and outcomes of the State Disaster Committees including, but not limited to:

- Completed revisions of the California Disaster Response Plan in November of 2000.
- Supported the development of a State Public Affairs Disaster Response Plan. The PA plan is now fully approved per the NHQ review process.

Provide leadership and support for the disaster response planning process in the state.

- Coordinated and participated with Disasters Services, NHQ and the Bay Area Chapters in a catastrophic earthquake response planning process intended to produce a comprehensive response plan for a large Bay Area earthquake and to provide a the basic model for a catastrophic earthquake response in Southern California.
- Participated in a statewide Bay Area EQ Drill to test the concepts and merits of the catastrophic EQ plan. Drill participants in the Bay Area Chapters as well as local, county, state and federal governments.
- Evaluated all 46 Chapter disaster response plans to current Red Cross requirements.

Manage a system to support disaster training within the state.

- Developed California's annual statewide training plan for instructional courses offered throughout the state.
- Coordinated 65 Intermediate and Advanced Disaster Services training courses providing training to about 800 individuals.
- Coordinated 20 leadership development classes (Serving the Diverse Community, Inclusive Leader, Disaster Director Orientation, and CDEIS) providing training to more than 300 individuals.
- Awarded approximately 60 scholarships for \$40,000 in support of Intermediate, Advanced and Leadership training in this last year when such funding would be available.
- Supported a review process to determine the feasibility of hosting a Red Cross Disaster Institute in FY 2003.

Manage the Disaster Services Human Resources (DSHR) System within the state.

- Administered and maintained 2,400+ records for active California DSHR members and more than 3,800 records overall associated with the California DSHR system.
- Recruited and deployed more than 800 DSHR members to 44 DR's from 40 Chapters.
- Processed 49 requests for the promotion of DSHR members from 24 Chapters.
- Administered a selection process that identified 45 DSHR members to be included in the Disaster Leadership Initiative.
- Hired an administrative assistant to assist with DSHR administration, recruitment and deployments.

Maintain an effective working relationship with the Governor's Office of Emergency Management, Department of Social Services and other appropriate state government and voluntary organizations active in disaster.

- Attended quarterly Statewide Emergency Preparedness Committee meetings in Sacramento.
- Participated in periodic California Care and Shelter SEMS Specialist Committee meetings.
- Participated in California repatriation planning meetings with California Department of Social Services staff and local government representatives.
- Participated in California In-Kind Donation planning meetings with Governors Office of Emergency Service.
- Completing updates to the Statement of Understanding with Red Cross and the Governors Office of Emergency Service.
- Completing updates to the repatriation plan with the California Department of Social Services.

Support Chapter capacity building efforts for disaster response.

- Maintained linkages, agreements, SOU's etc. with groups and vendors.
- Finalized outcomes from the Red Cross Hispanic Recruitment Initiative.
- Supported mitigation efforts in the American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter and the American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles funded by the Allstate Foundation.

Provided additional resources to Chapters to their disaster response programs including:

- Provided Multilingual Shelter Community Tools to all California Chapters that included language bridge books, posters and banners to increase understanding between Red Cross workers and the people served in Red Cross shelters.
- Direct support to provide care and shelter supplies for six Chapters totaling 1,050 cots and 3,100 blankets

### **Significant Accomplishments to June 30, 2001**

- Placed 12 Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs) in California Chapters and 5 out-of-state Chapters.
- Refurbished 5 ERVs by repairing or replacing major mechanical and electrical systems as needed.
- Placed 25 100-unit shelter trailers in California Chapters.
- Placed seven 1,000-unit shelter trailers at seven sites in California.
- Placed 33 satellite communications units in California Chapters.

- Placed enhanced radio communications equipment statewide (47.41, 800 MHz and 450 MHz).
- Provided computer equipment to 38 California Chapters.
- Provided 5,600 cots and 11,400 blankets to 16 California Red Cross Chapters.
- Provided more than 400,000 pieces of Community Disaster Education materials to 44 Chapters.
- Provided six sessions of the Chapter Manager Orientation Course to Disaster Services for 75 new managers, disaster directors and disaster leadership personnel.
- Funded 285 Intermediate and Advanced Disaster Training Courses, including 15 courses at the 1999 California Disaster Institute.
- Provided training scholarships to 35 Chapters at an expenditure of \$84,000.
- Funded one Disaster Management Training Course with 26 participants from 15 Chapters.
- Organized a Mass Care/Logistics Conference with 141 participants from 37 Chapters.
- Provided a Voluntary Organizations Information Directory to Chapters, enabling them to develop mutually beneficial relationships with voluntary organizations; developed an agreement “development and review process guidelines” for use by Chapters.
- Initiated the development of cooperative vendor agreements for organizations statewide. Organizations include Motel 6, Smart and Final Stores, SYSCO Foods, Home Depot, Safeway and Vons, Wal-Mart, Public Storage, Woodmen of the World Insurance Company and Jaycees of California.
- Processed more than 3,550 Disaster Services Human Resources recruitments to 175 Disaster Relief Operations.
- Supported Disaster Services Human Resources growth statewide, processing 582 promotion requests from 42 Chapters.
- Developed and implemented a California Shelter Team effort to recruit Chapter-based shelter response teams.
- Developed and implemented a process to recruit, train, and schedule liaisons at the California Office of Emergency Services Regional Emergency Operations Center.
- Provided all Chapters resource information regarding Hispanic recruitment, including Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, volunteer centers and media contacts.
- Developed a Hispanic recruitment plan for statewide use, including a pilot recruitment program working in conjunction with a consultant-marketing firm concentrating assistance in three Chapters in FY2000.
- Supported continuation of the Greater Bay Area catastrophic earthquake planning initiative, a joint effort of the Greater Bay Area Chapters, and the state lead Chapter for Disaster Services, and NHQ Disaster Services. Efforts resulted in a evolving plan and a multi-level response drill in FY01.
- Developed capacity enhancing outcomes to target strategic Chapters in California:
- Supported hiring of additional disaster, public affairs and fund-raising staff.
- Provided basic disaster training opportunities.